

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending. In the Office Action mailed August 23, 2006 (“Office Action”), the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 7-9 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,402,734 to Galpin, et al. (“Galpin”). The Examiner also rejected claims 5-6 and 10-13 as unpatentable over Galpin. Applicants amend claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10, and 13 with this response and add claims 14-20. Applicants hereby traverse the rejections of claims 1-13.

Objection to the Specification

Applicants have canceled the amendments referring to “vibration isolating” to which the examiner objected under 35 U.S.C. 132(a), 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1), and MPEP § 608.01(o). Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this objection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 7-9 as anticipated by Galpin under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). To establish a § 102 rejection, each and every element of the claim must be described, either explicitly or inherently, in a single prior art reference. *See* MPEP § 2131. Galpin, however, fails to disclose every element in Applicants’ amended claims. For example, Galpin at least fails to disclose an optical table “wherein the upper core and the lower core have substantially similar structures” as recited in Applicants’ amended claim 1.

According to the Examiner, Galpin discloses an “upper . . . core” as element 25 of the disclosed figures. *See* Office Action, pg. 3, para. 5. The structure of element 25 in Galpin, however, is not substantially similar to core 21, which the Examiner identified as a lower core. *See* OA, pg. 3, para. 5. Instead of disclosing a core as element 25, Galpin actually discloses this element as being “a number of debris retention structures, such as cups.” *See* Galpin, col. 4:22-23. Galpin further discloses that “the cups form cavities” to facilitate the cleaning of contaminants from the cups. *See* Galpin, col. 6:1-3. As a result, although Galpin discloses that

cups 25 may be surrounded by a honeycomb layer, this honeycomb layer will contain a number of cavities, in the form of cups 25, to facilitate the cleaning of contaminants. See Galpin, col. 6:29-33. Galpin fails to disclose that core 21 will possess corresponding cavities.

Moreover, although Galpin discloses that the cup depth should preferably be greater than 10 mm, and in one embodiment is 13 mm, Galpin also limits the total depth of the cup by teaching that “the depth of the cup should be shallow enough to allow easy cleaning.” See Galpin, col. 5:25-28. Despite disclosing the depths of the cups, Galpin fails to disclose the thickness of the layer containing cups 25 or the thickness of core 21. Accordingly, Galpin fails to teach or disclose an optical table “wherein the upper core and the lower core have substantially similar structures” as recited by Applicants’ amended claim 1. Applicants, therefore, submit that claim 1 is allowable over Galpin, and respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this objection and allow claim 1.

Claims 2-4 and 7-9 depend from and include all limitations of claim 1. Applicants, therefore, submit that claims 2-4 and 7-9 are allowable over Galpin for at least the same reasons given above for claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objections of and allow claims 2-4 and 7-9.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 5-6 and 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Galpin in view of the ordinary skill in the art. In this case, the cited reference fails to disclose an optical table “wherein the upper core and the lower core have substantially similar structures” as recited by Applicants’ amended claim 1. The cited reference also fails to disclose a method of manufacturing an optical table that includes making and bonding two subassemblies

“wherein the cores of the at least two subassemblies have substantially similar structures” as disclosed in Applicants’ amended claim 10. The level of ordinary skill in the art fails to correct these deficiencies. Applicants, therefore, traverse the rejections of claims 5-6 and 10-13.

Claim 5-6

Claims 5-6 depend from claim 1 and include all limitations recited in claim 1. As discussed above, Galpin fails to disclose all elements of claim 1, such as, for example, an optical table “wherein the upper core and the lower core have substantially similar structures.” The ordinary level of skill in the art of optical tables fails to cure this deficiency. For example, Applicants submit that an optical table, having an upper core and a lower core, “wherein the upper core and the lower core have substantially similar structures” as recited by Applicants’ amended claim 1, represents a new and non-obvious advancement over the ordinary level of skill in the art. For at least this reason, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over Galpin in view of the ordinary level of skill in the art.

Claims 5-6 depend from and include all limitations of Applicants’ amended claim 1. Applicants submit that claims 5-6 are also not obvious to one having ordinary skills in the art of optical tables for at least the same reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejections of claims 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 10-13

The Examiner also rejected claims 10-13 as unpatentable over Galpin in view of the ordinary level of skill in the art. Applicants, however, submit that claims 10-13 are patentable over the cited reference. Applicants hereby traverse these rejections.

Galpin fails to disclose a method of manufacturing an optical table that includes making and bonding two subassemblies “wherein the cores of the at least two subassemblies have substantially similar structures” as disclosed in Applicants’ amended claim 10. Galpin does disclose using glue to bond certain layers together. *See* Galpin, col. 4:46-48; col. 4:64-66; col. 5:11-12; and col. 17-19. As discussed above, the structures of the layer containing cups 25 and core 21 in Galpin are not substantially similar. In addition, Galpin fails to disclose an order for combining the layers. Accordingly, the optical table disclosed in Galpin cannot inform the method of manufacturing an optical table that includes making and bonding two subassemblies “wherein the cores of the at least two subassemblies have substantially similar structures” as disclosed in Applicants’ amended claim 10.

The level of ordinary skill in the art fails to correct this deficiency. The ordinary level of skill in constructing optical tables includes aligning and bonding each layer to the previous layer. As a result, Applicants submit that a method of manufacturing an optical table that includes “making at least two subassemblies . . . and bonding the subassemblies together . . . wherein the cores of the at least two subassemblies have substantially similar structures” as disclosed in Applicants’ amended claim 10, represents a new and non-obvious advancement over the ordinary level of skill in the art. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 10 and allow this claim.

Claims 11-13 depend from and include all limitations of Applicants’ amended claim 10. Applicants submit that claims 11-13 are also not obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of optical tables for at least the same reasons discussed above in connection with claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejections of claims 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Conclusion

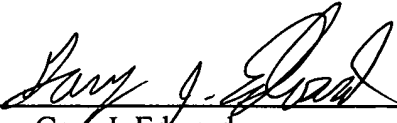
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending and newly added claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: November 20, 2006

By: 
Gary J. Edwards
Reg. No. 41,008

EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NO. EV 746096049 US
